MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

# Planning

## Growth & Development

## Delegated officer report for planning application

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| **Application no.** | 131559/FO/2021 |
| **Date registered valid:** | 13 October 2021 |
| **Proposal:** | Erection of 2.4m high weld mesh fence to playing fields |
| **Address:** | Withington Girls School , 100 Wellington Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M14 6BL |
| **Ward(s):** | Old Moat Ward |
| **Applicant:** | School Governors, Withington Girls School, 100 Wellington Road, Manchester, M14 6BL |
| **Agent (if any):** | Mr Alistair Baines, Cassidy + Ashton Group Ltd., 7 East Cliff, Preston, PR1 3JE |
| **Case officer:** | Constance Phillips<br>Tel: 0161 234 5792<br>Email: constance.phillips@manchester.gov.uk |
| **Recommendation:** | Approve |
| **Date of recommendation:** | **15 December 2021** |

## Application details

**Type of application:** Full Application Consent

**Development type:** Minor Other

**Date of site visit:** 30 November 2021

**Standard consultations:** Printed: 27 October 2021 Expired: 17 November 2021

**Neighbour notifications:** Printed: 27 October 2021 Expired: 17 November 2021

**Site notice:** No site notice has been produced

**Press advert:** No press advert had been published

**Departure from Development Plan:** No

**Environmental Statement:** Not required

## Description of site/building

**Listed building:** Not applicable

**Conservation area:** Not applicable

**Tree Preservation Order:** Not applicable

The application relates to a medium sized secondary school for girls, consisting of a mixture of single, two and three storey buildings, built over a period of many years, with sports pitches and playgrounds/landscaping. The latest addition was a two storey extension to the sports hall along with additional car parking approved in 2017 and in 2020 another two storey extension was approved, to provide a canteen, learning space and a terrace (126199/FO/2020).

## Description of area

The school site is bounded by Wellington Road, Victoria Road and the rear of housing on Leighbrook Road and Brocklebank Road, in a predominantly residential area of Withington, close to Fallowfield and Withington District Centres.

## Description of development

The applicant is seeking permission to erect a 2.4m high weld mesh fence along the rear perimeter of the school field.

## Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents, as per appendix 1 – No comments received.

Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture) – No objection to the works but recommended a tree replacement scheme and tree works condition.

## Policies

The following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application.

The Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012:
- Policy DM1 - Development Management
- Policy SP1 - Spatial Principles
- Policy EN1 - Design Principles

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)
- Chapter 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

For reasons to be outlined below, it is considered the proposal accords with the principles of these policy documents.

## Issues

**Principle –** The principle of erecting new fencing around a secondary school field, to improve security, is acceptable, however consideration must be given to the proposals siting, scale, design and its impact upon existing levels of residential and visual amenity.

**Siting and scale –** The 2.4m high fencing would be erected along the far side (north-west) of the playing fields, sited 2m from the boundary shared with the properties along Leighbrook Road, which features a high brick wall, to be retained. The fencing would not far protrude above the existing wall and therefore are unlikely to effect views into or out of the school, nor should it impact upon residents. The location, siting and scale of the fencing is considered appropriate, in line with policies DM1, SP1 and the NPPF.

**Design, appearance and visual amenity –** The proposed fencing would be 'Vmex V3' weld mesh fencing in green (RAL 6005) in 3m wide panels, with a gate at each end and one in the centre. There already exists similar green weld mesh fencing atop the brick wall along the Victoria Road boundary. The fencing provides an additional layer of security to this boundary and would match the fencing which already exists within other parts of the site. The school is not listed nor is it sited within a conservation area. It is considered the boundary treatment would be in-keeping with the existing campus and other education settings and would be constructed of appropriate materials. Due to the existing high brick wall around the field, tall trees along the north-west boundary and distance from the highway, the fence is not considered to form a prominent feature within the street scenes surrounding the school. For the reasons above the fencing is not considered to have a significant impact upon the rest of the campus, Leighbrook or Victoria Road or the wider area's visual amenity, pursuant to policies DM1, SP1 and EN1 and the NPPF.

**Trees and landscaping –** The 2m gap between the proposed fencing and existing wall would feature meadow grass, providing a secure and undisturbed area for fauna. The scheme involves the felling of 3no trees (T1, T5 and T6) and 2no groups (G4 and G5) which are all Category U and have been recommended for removal in the submitted tree survey. The MCC arborist had no objection to their removal given the location and category, however they did recommend a replacement scheme. The replacement scheme involves the planting of 6no 2m high 8-10cm diameter trees (2no hornbeam, 2no whitebeam and 2no sweet gum), with an area of approximately 1m radius from each stem to be kept mulched with organic wood/bark chip approximately 50-100mm depth to suppress weed growth and aid establishment. This is

deemed appropriate and conditions have been attached to ensure the trees to be retained and those to be planted are protected during works and replaced if any fail, pursuant to policy EN9.

**Residential amenity –** The nearest residential dwellings consist of the properties along Leighbrook Road, which share a boundary with the school field, along which sits a high brick wall. The wire fencing will be sited 2m beyond this wall and due to the design and the existing wall, would not cause overshadowing of the residential gardens. The fencing would keep students further away from this boundary when the field is in use, which would arguably improve privacy for these residents, as well as reduce noise. All trees to be removed are currently category U, meaning their removal may be welcomed by residents, as the younger, healthy replacements are less likely to have an effect on their gardens, the boundary wall and light.
In addition to this, no comments or objections have been received in response to the neighbour notification. It is not considered that existing levels of residential amenity currently enjoyed by surrounding residents would be significantly harmed as a result of this fence, pursuant to the policies contained within the Core Strategy and NPPF.

**Conclusion –** No comments or objections have been received from local residents, the proposal broadly complies with policies DM1, SP1, EN1 and the NPPF, particularly Chapter 8, in which it is states that local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. Additionally it is not considered to significantly harm the residential or visual amenity of the area, therefore the development may commence in accordance with the following conditions.

## Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved polices of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

**Recommendation:** Approve

## Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. Issues have arisen during the consideration of this application and the officer negotiated with the applicant/agent to reach a satisfactory resolution.

**Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval**

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:
- Dwg 'P01 A'
- Tree impact plan
Both stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 13th October 2021 and:
- Tree planting scheme
Stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 1st December 2021.

Reason - To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

3) In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree, shrub or hedge which is to be as shown as retained on the approved plans and particulars; and paragraphs (a) and (b) below shall have effect until the expiration of 5 years from the date of the occupation of the building for its permitted use.

(a) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the local planning authority. Any topping or lopping approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 5387 (Trees in relation to construction)
(b) If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the local planning authority.
(c) The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and particulars before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of the development, and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the local planning authority.

Reason - In order avoid damage to trees/shrubs adjacent to and within the site which are of important amenity value to the area and in order to protect the character of the area, in accordance with policies EN9 and EN15 of the Core Strategy.

4) All tree work should be carried out by a competent contractor in accordance with British Standard BS 3998 "Recommendations for Tree Work".

Reason - In order avoid damage to trees/shrubs adjacent to and within the site which are of important amenity value to the area and in order to protect the character of the area, in accordance with policies EN9 and EN15 of the Core Strategy.

5) The hard and soft landscaping scheme approved by the City Council as local planning authority, shown on drawing 'P01 A' (received 13th October 2021) and the 'Tree planting scheme' (received 1st December 2021), shall be implemented not later than 12 months from the date of commencement of works.

Reason - To ensure that a satisfactory landscaping scheme for the development is carried out that respects the character and visual amenities of the area, in accordance with policies SP1, EN9 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

**Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified**

Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)

19 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
11 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
39 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
31 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
43 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
35 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
71 Victoria Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M14 6BW
51 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
49 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
41 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
39 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
37 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
19 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
77 Victoria Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M14 6BP
75 Victoria Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M14 6BW
5 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
45 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
5 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
33 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
27 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
21 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
15 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
73 Victoria Road, Old Moat, Manchester, M14 6BW
7 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
47 Brocklebank Road, Manchester, M14 6EL
9 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
7 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
43 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
41 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
37 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
35 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
3 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
29 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
25 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
23 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
17 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
11 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
1 Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
11A Leighbrook Road, Manchester, M14 6BG
9 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
17 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL

15 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL
13 Finchley Road, Manchester, M14 6FL

## Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M
Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -
Flood Zones Type 3 (high risk) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH